

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-10 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 NEAE-00

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P R 121409Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3392

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 6967

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, IS, US

SUBJECT: U.S. ARMS FOR ISRAEL; PRESS REPORTS AND REACTION

REF: TEL AVIV 6944

1. THE LOCAL PRESS HEARTLILY WELCOMED THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S DECISION TO APPROVE THE SUPPLY OF NEW ARMS FOR ISRAEL. ALL SUGGEST THAT THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS RELATED TO U.S. ELECTIONS; MAARIV DESCRIBES IT AS AN "ELECTION STUNT".

2. THE JERUSALEM POST OCTOBER 12 REPORTS THAT THE U.S. APPROVAL TO SUPPLY ISRAEL AN "EXTREMELY SOPHISTICATED MISSILE GUIDANCE SYSTEM" DOES NOT INVOLVE AN INCREASE IN THE COST OF AMERICAN MILITARY AID WHICH, IT SYAS, IS AT LEVEL OF \$1.5 BILLION, PLUS \$800 MILLION IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. THE POST QUOTES FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON AS SAYING THAT THERE IS "NO NEW ARMS AGREEMENT" BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ISRAEL, BUT THAT A "NEW DECISION" ON "IMPORTANT ITEMS" WAS REACHED BY THE U.S.

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3. ANOTHER REPORT IN THE POST SAYS QUOTE ISRAEL MAY SOON
SUBMIT A NEW ARMS SHOPPING LIST, IT WAS LEARNED HERE
YESTERDAY FOLLOWING THE FORD-ALLON MEETING. ALLON
ALSO MET WITH SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER YESTERDAY.
WELL-PLACED SOURCES SAID THAT ALL THE ITEMS WERE VERY
SOPHISTICATED AND WERE CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL TO ISRAEL'S
SECURITY. ISRAEL HAD PRESSED FOR THEM OVER A PERIOD
OF MANY MONTHS.
IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ISRAEL IS RECIEVING NOT ONLY THE
WEAPONS IT REQUESTED BUT THE KNOW-HOW FOR MANUFACTURING
THE TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILE.....
IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT FORD GAVE NO CONCRETE REPLY TO
ISRAEL'S \$2.3 BILLION AID REQUEST FOR FISCAL 1978, BUT
PROMISED TO REVIEW ISRAEL'S NEEDS IN A "POSITIVE
SPIRIT". END QUOTE

4. ACCORDING TO HAARETZ (MARGALIT), AMERICAN EXPERTS
WONDER HOW ISRAEL WILL BE ABLE TO PAY FOR THE NEW ARMS
DEAL WITHOUT A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE OF MILITARY AID.
THE PERSHING MISSILE HAS NOT BEEN INCLUDED, MARGALIT
SAYS, BECAUSE 4-5 YEARS WOULD BE NEEDED TO FIT IT WITH
A CONVENTIONAL WARHEAD.

5. MAARIV NOTES THAT WAY IN WHICH THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS
MADE: THE FIRST REPORT CAME FROM JERUSALEM, SO AS NOT TO
PROVIDE FOOD FOR MALICIOUS COMMENT, AND CONVEYED ISRAEL'S
GRATITUDE IN TERMS WHICH ARE EMINENTLY SUITABLE
FOR QUOTING IN CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS. MAARIV EDITORIAL-
IZES THAT ISRAEL SHOULD KEEP STRICTLY NEUTRAL IN THE U.S.
ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

6. DAVAR SAYS THAT THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF THE U.S.
COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL REDUCES SUCH DISPUTES AS THE ONE
ABOUT AMOCO TO THEIR TRUE, MODEST DIMENSIONS. PRESI-
DENT FORD HAS SHOWN UNDERSTANDING FOR THE THESIS THAT
ONLY A STRONG ISRAEL WILL BE ABLE TO CONSIDER FURTHER
OPTIONS. DAVAR ALSO ACKNOWLEDGES THAT DIFFERENCES OF
VIEW REMAIN OVER ARMS SALES TO SAUDIA ARABIA
AND THE ARAB BOYCOTT.

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